

Export Programs Guide

Forthcoming Edition Highlights Government Assistance

by William Corley
Export America

The 2003–2004 edition of the *Export Programs Guide* will be available this spring. This latest primer on federal programs to assist U.S. exporters, particularly small and medium-sized companies, offers a wealth of information.

The *Export Programs Guide* is an official publication of the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee (TPCC), a group of 19 U.S. government agencies that jointly encourage American exports of goods and services. The Department of Commerce, as the lead TPCC agency, figures in this guide, specifically in the activities of the department's International Trade Administration (ITA). The guide is a compilation of the ITA Trade Information Center, in conjunction with the ITA Office of Public Affairs/Publications Division.

The forthcoming *Export Programs Guide* contains dozens of services for trade promotion and financing. For instance, the first three chapters focus on export counseling and assistance: general, industry-specific, and country-specific programs. U.S. companies will find numerous ITA services there, including those of the Trade Information Center, the U.S. Commercial Service, and the Trade Development division, among others. U.S. companies will also find a variety

of local and national resources. The *Export Programs Guide* is an extensive directory, with contact names, telephone numbers, and Web sites.

CONTACTING THE RIGHT PLACE THE FIRST TIME

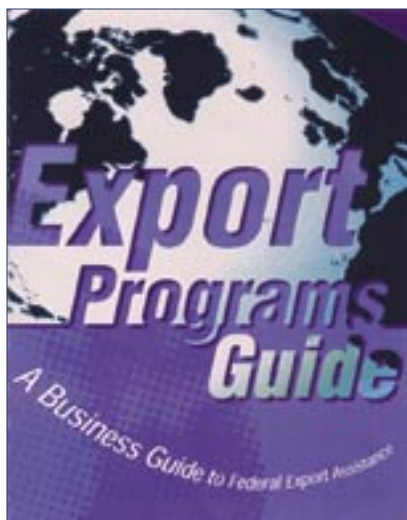
The International Trade Administration is the centerpiece of the U.S. government's export promotion activities through its Washington, D.C., and overseas offices, as well as the Export Assistance Center network (a list of which appears on the back of every issue of *Export America*). Each of these centers—there are more than 100 across the United States—provides services tailored to the needs of individual exporters. Additionally, the Trade Information Center (TIC) in Washington, D.C., acts as a primary resource for export assistance. The center's staff provides information on all government export programs, practical advice on exporting, and answers to every imaginable export inquiry. When necessary, the TIC staff directs callers to additional resources and contacts on the local and state level. All this TIC assistance is available free of charge at (800) USA-TRADE (872-8723).

The TIC staff and other ITA personnel also provide up-to-date country and industry information for exporters and potential exporters. The Trade Information Center offers export

counseling regarding Asia, Africa, the Near East, Western Europe, and the Western Hemisphere. (There are separate ITA offices in Washington, D.C., for Eurasia and Central and Eastern Europe, additional posts overseas, and complementary export services from the Department of Agriculture and the Department of State.) This free assistance includes country-specific information on commercial laws, import regulations, opportunities for U.S. businesses, and much more. TIC trade specialists help U.S. companies with export documentation, particularly Harmonized System classification, NAFTA certificates of origin, and other U.S. and foreign customs procedures. In addition to these resources available by one simple phone call, the TIC Web site (www.export.gov/tic) offers a plethora of national and regional information to help U.S. businesses export.

NEW PROGRAMS

The 2003–2004 *Export Programs Guide* highlights new programs for business development and trade financing. For example, BuyUSA.com is an electronic marketplace especially suited to the needs of small and medium-sized companies. The site helps U.S. businesses find potential foreign buyers and partners on-line without the immediate outlays of international travel and overseas advertising. A small subscription fee allows firms to



obtain worldwide exposure for their products and services. For more information, visit www.buyusa.com, or call (866) 855-8666.

The *Export Programs Guide* also features Internet services such as those of the U.S. Small Business Administration. The relevant Web site, www.sba.gov, details the agency's services, offers downloadable files, and provides information about a variety of state and federal resources for small firms. Of particular interest to potential exporters are SBA programs and services that help U.S. companies establish and finance international activities.

A new SBA program, *ExportExpress*, which is featured in the forthcoming *Export Programs Guide*, provides lenders with a guarantee of repayment on small-business export loans (up to a maximum loan amount of \$250,000). Additionally, *ExportExpress* loans enable small firms to develop international business through fundamental undertakings, such as trade show participation, sales literature translation, and backing of lines of credit. *ExportExpress* applicants must have been in business for at least a year (but not of necessity in export activities). In line with the collaborative spirit of the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee, the *ExportExpress* program ensures that an approved

applicant's local Export Assistance Center staff and local SBA representative work together with the borrower and provide pertinent technical assistance to him.

READING MATERIAL

Besides the usual array of trade promotion services, research materials, and financing options, the latest *Export Programs Guide* lists numerous periodicals for U.S. companies that do or would like to do business overseas. *Export America*, the ITA monthly for small and medium-sized U.S. companies, naturally appears in the guide. However, there are several other ITA publications for industries and regions, and these have counterparts in other government agencies. For instance, the U.S. Department of Agriculture offers an important monthly magazine and a biweekly newsletter. (See the sidebar on some of the featured publications for exporters.)

AVAILABILITY

The new *Export Programs Guide* will be available this spring in three primary places: on-line (downloadable at www.trade.gov/media/publications), at every U.S. Export Assistance Center (free copies while they last), and at the Government Printing Office on-line (for purchase at <http://bookstore.gpo.gov>). The Trade Information Center will also post the guide, chapter by chapter and as a complete PDF file, on its site: www.export.gov/tic. ■

The Current
Export Programs Guide
www.export.gov/tic

The site includes each chapter separately, as well as a downloadable PDF of the publication.

PERIODICALS FOR EXPORTERS

Market Information and Sales Leads

Export America

<http://exportamerica.doc.gov>

The Web site includes a sampling of the current month as well as an archive of past issues. Articles are generally available as both PDF and HTML files.

AgExporter

www.fas.usda.gov/info/agexporter/agexport.html

This monthly magazine, which is published by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, offers technical advice, market research, and descriptions of export services. The Web site includes back issues.

BISNIS Bulletin

www.bisnis.doc.gov

Covering business in Eurasia, this monthly ITA newsletter highlights important market developments, trade events, and U.S. commercial opportunities.

Buyer Alert

www.fas.usda.gov/agexport/bainfo.html

Through electronic distribution to overseas offices of the Department of Agriculture, this biweekly newsletter allows U.S. agricultural firms to advertise inexpensively to thousands of potential buyers worldwide.

Central & Eastern Europe Commercial Update

www.export.gov/ceeibc

Another ITA newsletter, this monthly contains articles on trade and investment in Central and Eastern Europe, including tender announcements and sales leads.

Export.gov Newsletter

www.export.gov/subscribe.html

This monthly e-mail publication compiles export information and links to a variety of publications, Webcasts, and trade directories. Export.gov is the U.S. government's trade portal.

For information on other ITA newsletters, including *Export Aerospace News* and *Environmental Export News*, visit www.trade.gov/media/publications.